

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2709

C O N F I D E N T I A L MONTEVIDEO 4588

STADIS//////////

EXDIS/EYES ONLY FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY SHLAUDEMANN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SHUM, UY, UY

SUBJECT: COHA ACCUSATIONS

REF: STATE 290113

1. THANK YOU FOR YOUR MESSAGE AND THE BROADER PERSPECTIVE YOU GAVE TO THE BIRNS' ATTACK ON ME. IT WAS PLAYED FAR MORE PROMINENTLY HERE AND WE ASSUMED, ERRONEOUSLY IT APPEARS, EEQUAL INTEREST AND PLAY ELSEWHERE. YOUR REFERENCE TO HIS OTHER ATTACKS AGAINST ARA AND YOU, ETC. ARE COMFORTING ONLY IN THAT OTHERS I RESPECT WILL KNOW HOW TO JUDGE HIM AND HIS SLANDERS AGAINST ME.

2. YOU WERE RIGHT, OF COURSE, IN VIEWING MY MESSAGE AS INTEMPERATE AND I AM SORRY FOR THAT. INTemperANCE HAS NO PLACE IN OUR PROFESSION AND I BELIEVE MY TRANSGRESSIONS OF THIS KIND HAVE NOT BEEN MANY. IT WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER, OF COURSE, SIMPLY TO REPORT WHAT HAD OCCURRED HERE AND TO HAVE ASKED HOW THE INCIDENT WAS PLAYED AND WHAT IF ANYTHING WAS TO BE DONE.

3. I DO APPRECIATE THE EFFORTS YOU AND OTHERS HAVE CONSISTENTLY MADE TO GIVE PERSPECTIVE TO CONGRESSIONAL CRITICS, AND REGRET THAT YOU APPEARED TO BE THE TARGET OF MY BARBS, WHICH WAS NOT INTENDED. MY EXPLANATION OF THIS REALLY RELATES TO OTHER MATTERS, ABOUT WHICH I WILL WRITE YOU SEPARATELY.

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4. THERE ARE SEVERAL POINTS WHICH SEEM RELEVANT IN LIGHT OF

YOUR MESSAGE:

(A) I DID NOT SEE KOCH TO GIVE HIM ".6 8\$3" AS THERE IS REALLY NO SIDE TO THIS QUESTION WHICH IS MINE. I WENT TO SEE HIM, AS YOU AND EVERYONE ELSE URGED ME TO, IN HOPES OF GIVING HIM A DIFFERENT, AND I BELIEVE MORE ACCURATE, PERSPECTIVE OF THE SITUATION IN URUGUAY. THIS PERSPECTIVE, AS YOU KNOW, IS IN NO WAY A WHITEWASH OR A "NOT GUILTY" FINDING ON URUGUAY RE HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS. BUT I DO BELIEVE IT IS FFAR CLOSER TO THE TRUTH THAN THE OTHER VIEWS KOCH HAD AS CONVEYED BY AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, WILSON FERREIRA, ET AL;

(B) I AM NOT AWARE THAT ANYONE, AND CERTAINLY NOT I, THOUGHT I COULD CHANGE KOCH'S MIND BY MY VISIT. IT WOULD BE MORE THAN UNREALISTIC TO BELIEVE BE WOULD CONSIDER HIS ACT AN ERROR. THUS THE PURPOSE OF MY VISIT, AS WE AGREED, WAS TO ESTABLISH PERSONAL CONTACT AND TO ASCERTAIN WHAT COULD BE DONE IN THE FUTURE. I HAD NOT EVEN INTENDED, AS PREVIOUSLY AGREED, TO GO INTO OUR DIFFERING FACTS UNTIL HE BROUGHT THIS UP IN QUESTIONS HE PUT TO ME. THE MOST I WOULD JUDGE, AS I CAREFULLY REPORTED TO YOU AND ALL OTHERS CONCERNED, WAS THAT HE RECEIVED ME IN A FRIENDLY WAY, SHOWED REAL INTEREST IN WHAT I HAD TO SAY AND SEEMED TO ME AT LEAST TO HAVE HIS MIND OPENED SOMEWHAT. HE ALSO SAID HE WAS NOT COMMITTED TO PRESS FOR AN EXTENSION OF HIS AMENDMENT ON URUGUAY IF THINGS WERE BETTER THAN HE SUPPOSED AND SAID HE WOULD DEFER FOR SOME MONTHS A DECISION WHETHER TO DO SO. HE ASKED IF I COULD SEE HIM AGAIN AND IF NOT SEND HIM IN WRITING INFORMATION OF THE KIND WHICH I HAD GIVEN HIM ORALLY. WE ALSO DISCUSSED A POSSIBLE VISIT HERE BY HIM AND ESPECIALLY OF SOME INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AS BEING A USEFUL THING. WITH EVERYONE'S CONCURRENCE, AFTER I HAD REPORTED ON MY VISIT, I ASSEMBLED A GREAT DEAL OF FACTUAL INFORMATION FOR HIM BASED ON EMBASSY REPORTS, BUT I HAVE NEVER BEEN TOLD WHETHER THE JOB WAS COMPLETED AND THE MATERIAL SENT TO HIM.

(C) I DO STILL BELIEVE THAT QUIET DIPLOMACY IS THE BEST WAY TO WORK EFFECTIVELY IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS FIELD AND ADMIT AT LEAST AN APPEARANCE OF INCONSISTENCY BY ASKING THAT MY OWN EFFORTS BE MADE PUBLIC. BY THIS I NEVER MEANT A PUBLIC STATEMENT, BUT RATHER AN UNCLASSIFIED EFFORT (AS I HAD RECOMMENDED MONTHS AGO) TO SHOW CONGRESSMEN KOCH AND FRASER (BEFORE WHOSE COMMITTEES I HAD BEEN ATTACKED) WHAT WE HAD BEEN DOING. AS I REPORTED TO YOU, I FOUND KOCH SEEMINGLY UNAWARE OF THE NATURE AND EXTENT

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OF OUR EFFORTS, AND AS WELL OF THE KINDS OF FACTS WE HAD BEEN REPORTING. HIS STATEMENT, WHEN HIS AMENDMENT WAS PASSED, THAT IT MIGHT FORCE THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS IN URUGUAY, IS PRETTY GOOD TESTIMONY TO THIS FACT.

(D) FINALLY, RE THIS INCIDENT, I DO APPRECIATE YOUR STATEMENT THAT THE TRANSITION TEAM WILL BE INFORMED

OF OUR EFFORTS HERE ON HUMAN RIGHTS.

5. THE UNCLASSIFIED TEXT OF BIRNS' STATEMENT WAS APPRECIATED AS WE HAD NOT SEEN IT PREVIOUSLY IN ITS ENTIRETY. A SEPARATE MESSAGE WILL COMMENT ON THIS.

6. AS YOU KNOW, UPON RETURN HERE I DISCUSSED MY WASHINGTON/ NEW YORK ACTIVITIES FULLY WITH THE ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER AND WOUND UP AGAIN BY URGING THE GOU TO INVITE SUITABLE INTERNATIONAL INSPECTION (IAHRC, PREFERABLY) UNDER VERY OPEN TERMS, AS THE BEST WAY TO GET THE URUGUAYAN PICTURE CLARIFIED. THE GOU, I STRESSED, COULD NEVER GET OUT FROM UNDER THIS CLOUD BY SIMPLY ATTACKING ITS ACCUSERS, OR BY FAILING TO CORRECT THOSE PROCEDURES RE DETAINEES WHICH ARE WRONG, EXCEPT BY A POLICY OF OPENESS AND OF DEMONSTRATION. NOW THAT BLANCO IS BACK I INTEND TO TAKE IT UP WITH HIM. I AM HOPEFUL THAT SOMETHING USEFUL CAN BE DONE AS I AM NOT WITHOUT INFLUENCE HERE; IN PART, IRONICALLY, BECAUSE OF THE ATTACKS WHICH HAVE BEEN MADE ON ME. MINISTER OF DEFENSE RAVENNA, IN A RECENT TALK WITH ME, EXPRESSED REAL INTEREST IN THE IDEA OF INVITING KOCH TO COME HERE. ALSO, THE GOU IS WORKING ON A NEW LAW TO GOVERN SECURITY OFFENDERS. WHILE THE BILL, AS WE SEE IT, IS FAR FROM IDEAL AND IS OPEN TO ATTACK, IT DOES APPEAR TO BE AIMED AT GIVING PROMPT ACCESS TO LAWYERS AND DUE PROCESS BEFORE CIVILIAN JUDGES TO MOST SUSPECTS. IF IT DOES WORK OUT THIS WAY, IT WOULD APPEAR TO BE A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION IN SPITE OF ITS DEFECTS. SOME MONTHS AGO IN AN IN-DEPTH REVIEW WITH GENERAL VADORA, I SUGGESTED A DRAMATIC REDUCTION OF THEIR "SECURITY" PRISON POPULATION. HE THEN SAID THAT MANY HUNDREDS COULD BE RELEASED IF THEY HAD SOME PLACE TO GO. I AM HOPING THAT CHILE'S RECENT RE-
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LEASES WILL INSPIRE THE GOU TO TAKE SIMILAR BENEFICIAL STEPS.
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